Human Learning recommended from the Example of MOSES.

A

SERMON

Preached before the

GENTLEMEN

EDUCATED at

Merchant-Taylors School,

AT THE

PARISH-CHURCH

OF

St. MARY LE BOW,

On THURSDAY, *December* 1. 1726.

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TO

Smith Meggot, Eſq;	Mr. *William James*,
Mr. *William Clarke*,	Mr. *Benj. Jenks*,
Mr. *Nath. Prettey*,	Mr. *William Willet*,
Mr. *Joſhua Hinton*,	Mr. *John Horſley*,

STEWARDS

Of the FEAST held by the Gentlemen Educated at *Merchant-Taylors School*; This SERMON (which was firſt Preach'd and is now Publiſh'd at their Requeſt) is hereby Dedicated, as a Teſtimony of that Eſteem and Regard which is due to them, from their

Affectionate Humble Servant,

and School-fellow,

William Berriman.

ACTS VII. 22.

And Moſes *was learned in all the wiſdom of the* Egyptians.

N. B. This Sermon being too long to be preach'd at once, the paſſages thus encloſed [" "] were omitted in the delivery.

THESE words are part of St. *Stephen*'s apology before the *Jewiſh Sanhedrin*, where he ſtood accuſed of *blaſphemy againſt Moſes, and againſt God*[a], for having ſaid, *that Jeſus of Nazareth* ſhould *deſtroy* that *place* (*viz.* the temple of *Jeruſalem*) *and* ſhould *change the cuſtoms which Moſes delivered them*[b]. [" In which apology he has been " thought[c] to have interſpers'd many hiſtorical mat- " ters, that did but little concern the merits of the " cauſe, and ſome that are hardly to be reconciled " with the accounts given of the ſame matters in the " Old Teſtament.

" 'Twould be both tedious and foreign to my " preſent purpoſe, to enter upon particulars. But " ſurely they muſt have a mean opinion of that *Ho-* " *ly Spirit* with which he is ſaid[d] to have been *fill'd*,

[a] Acts vi. 11. [b] *Ver.* 14. [c] Sentimens de quelques Theologiens de Hollande ſur *l' hiſtoire critique du vieux teſtament compoſée par Mr. Simon Prêtre.* Onzieme lettre, p. 243. Ed. 1711. [d] Acts vi. 3, 5. *and* vii. 55.

" who

" who can ſuppoſe our apologiſt, notwithſtanding " that, ſo ſubject to miſtake, and guilty of impertinence. They muſt have likewiſe a very mean " opinion of the skill and learning of thoſe *Hebrew* " doctors, who, we are told [e], *were not able to reſiſt* " *the wiſdom and ſpirit by which he ſpake.* And they " muſt, laſtly, have a mean opinion of St. *Luke*, the " inſpired writer of this hiſtory of the *Acts*, who could " ſet down an oration which they judge ſo incoherent and erroneous, without any other remark either " on that or its author, but ſuch as may ſerve to " teſtify his approbation.

" There may poſſibly be ſome things in it, the deſign whereof is not to be diſcover'd at firſt ſight, " and others which may *ſeem* a little different from " thoſe Paſſages they refer to in the Old Teſtament. " But a more attentive conſideration will convince " us, that the former are fairly reducible to his main " deſign, and the latter not wholly incapable of reconciliation."]

He endeavours to defend what he had taught [" of " the abolition of the *Moſaick* rites"] by obſerving how late the *temple* was erected by *Solomon*, and that indeed *the Moſt High dwelleth not in temples made with hands* [f]; that the covenant with *Abraham* [g] was long before the giving of the *law*, nay, and before the appointment of *circumciſion* too, and conſequently could have no neceſſary and immutable dependance upon either; that indeed the *temple* and its ritual obſervances were not contained in it, no, nor ſo much as the continual poſſeſſion of the earthly *Canaan*, ſince both himſelf and the ſucceeding patriarchs *ſojourned therein as in a ſtrange country*, and without prejudice to the

[e] Acts vi. 10, [f] vii. 47, 48. [g] *Ver.* 2, *&c.*

ſubſtance of the promiſe, were for a long time either promoted or oppreſs'd in *Egypt*. He ſhews 'em likewiſe that their own lawgiver had taught the very ſame doctrine, when he foretold the coming of *Jeſus*, as *a Prophet like unto* himſelf, [h] a lawgiver as well as he, and that he himſelf had met with ſuch diſreſpect and oppoſition from them, [i] that our apologiſt might the leſs wonder at the ſame uſage. From hence he takes occaſion to inſert ſuch account of the birth and character of *Moſes* as ſhews his great eſteem for him, ſome part whereof you have heard read in the text, ——*And Moſes was learned* (ἐπαιδεύθη, was educated, or taught at ſchool) *in all the wiſdom of the Egyptians.* In diſcourſing on which words, I ſhall

I. Enquire into the education and attainments of *Moſes*, who is here ſaid to have been *learned in all the wiſdom of the Egyptians*, [" and endea-
" vour to vindicate his character againſt thoſe
" foul calumnies, with which a modern critick
" has the boldneſs to aſperſe it."] From hence I ſhall take occaſion

II. To deduce the *lawfulneſs*, and explain the *advantages* of *human learning*, in oppoſition to thoſe weak ſophiſms and cavils which ſome conceited noveliſts have imagined to the contrary. And then

III. I ſhall conclude all with ſome ſuitable inferences and deductions from the whole.

[h] Acts vii. 20, &c. [i] *Ver.* 37.

I. *Firſt*

I. *First* then, for the education and attainments of *Moſes:* When we conſider the great care that uſes to be taken of the education of young princes, and the particular character of *Moſes*, who was brought up in the court of *Pharaoh*, and received as the adopted [k] (or as ſome ſay [l], acknowledg'd for the true-born) *ſon of Pharaoh's daughter*, there will (I judge) be no reaſon to diſpute, but that all due care was taken to inſtruct him in all thoſe arts and ſciences, which were thought proper for perſons of his quality. And to take away all doubt in the caſe, we are here expreſly aſſured by St. *Stephen*, that he *was* actually *learned*, or brought up, *in all the wiſdom of the Egyptians.* By which, without all queſtion, the moſt conſummate wiſdom and learning of thoſe times is meant. For St. *Stephen*'s buſineſs, you may remember, was to anſwer to the charge of *blaſphemy againſt Moſes, and*, thro' him, *againſt God.* This he does, partly by ſhewing that he had a high veneration for the character of *Moſes*, and partly by urging that what he had advanced was no way inconſiſtent with it.

To ſhew his veneration for the character of *Moſes*, he mentions his education in the *Egyptian* literature, which had been little to his purpoſe, if either the learning of the *Egyptians* had not been very conſiderable in that age of the world, or *Moſes* had not made ſome conſiderable progreſs in that kind of learning.

For the firſt of theſe, we find *Egypt*, by an inquiſitive author [m], called the *mother of arts*, and the *Egyp-*

[k] Præter Exod. vid. Joſeph. Ant. Jud. l. 2. c. 9. ſect. 7. Ed. Oxon. aliàs c. 5. [l] Philo de vit. Moſis, l. 1. [m] *Ægypti matris artium.* Macrob. Saturnal. l. 1. c. 15. *Plato Ægyptios omnium Philoſophiæ diſciplinarum parentes ſecutus eſt.* Macrob. in Somn. Scip. l. 1. c. 19.

tians are ſaid to have been the *parents of all kinds of philoſophy*, and to have been but *imitated* by *Plato*. In like manner he obſerves [n], that the *anceſtors of the* Egyptians *were the firſt that ventured to ſearch and meaſure out the heavens*, invited thereto (as it ſhould ſeem) by the commodiouſneſs of their ſituation, where by reaſon of the *perpetual ſerenity of the air*, they had always the opportunity of a *fair proſpect*.

And no wonder if this writer of the fifth century reckon'd 'em the *firſt*, tho' that may reaſonably be diſputed, when the more antient *Greeks* themſelves acknowledg'd them their maſters, and gave them the honour of precedency. To them, altho' *barbarians*, they referr'd their knowledge of *medicine* and *mechanicks*, of *geometry* and *aſtronomy*, and almoſt every ſcience that is great and uſeful, as well as polite and ornamental [o].

It is advanced indeed by *Philo* [p], that excepting ſome particulars which he has mention'd, *Moſes* was taught *the whole circle* of liberal *ſciences* beſides, by maſters that were called out of *Greece*. But here the *Alexandrian* Presbyter [q] has ſeaſonably corrected the miſtake of the *Alexandrian Jew*, and obſerv'd, from an author of greater antiquity than he, (what is indeed abundantly confirm'd by other teſtimonies) that

[n] *Ægyptiorum enim retro majores, quos conſtat primos omnium cœlum ſcrutari & metiri auſos, poſtquam perpetuæ apud ſe ſerenitatis obſequio cœlum ſemper ſuſpectû libero intuentes deprehenderunt.* Macrob. Somn. Scip. l. 1. c. 21. [o] Ἐκ τε τῆς ἑκάστῳ ζηλωθείσης παιδείας ἀποδείξεις φέρουσι, συνιστάντες ἐξ Αἰγύπτου μετενηνοχέναι πάντα δι' ὧν παρὰ τοῖς ἕλλησιν ἐθαυμάσθησαν. Diod. Sic. Biblioth. l. 1. p. 86. Ed. Laur. Rhod. 1604. Πλάτων δὲ οὐκ ἀρνεῖται τὰ κάλλιστα εἰς φιλοσοφίαν παρὰ τῶν βαρβάρων ἐμπορεύεσθαι· εἰς τε Αἴγυπτον ἀφικέσθαι ὁμολογεῖ. Clem. Alex. Strom. l. 1. p. 302. Vid. & Joſeph. Ant. Jud. l. 1. c. 9. alias 8. ſect. 2. item Euſeb. præp. Evang. l. 10. fere per tot. [p] Οἱ δ' ἀπὸ τῆς ἑλλάδος ἐπὶ μεγάλαις δωρεαῖς μεταπεμφθέντες — τὴν δ' ἄλλην ἐγκύκλιον παιδείαν ἕλληνες ἐδίδασκον. Philo de vitâ Moſis, l. 1. p. 412. Ed. Turneb. 1552.
[q] Clem. Alex. Strom. l. 1. p. 343.

the *Greeks* themſelves derived their knowledge of *grammar*, and the uſe of letters, from *Cadmus* and his fugitive *Phœnicians*, after the time of *Moſes*, and conſequently could be no way qualified to be his tutors and inſtructors. And when they had thus learnt the firſt rudiments of literature, whither then did they repair for farther improvement and perfection? We ſee by the examples of *Lycurgus* and *Solon*, of *Thales*, *Pythagoras* and *Plato*, and many others, that it was uſual for them to travel into *Egypt*, and expect the accompliſhment of *human learning*, by making up to the fountain from whence it was derived to 'em[e]. So that it was not without reaſon, that the *Egyptian* prieſt in *Plato*[f] did object to *Solon*, that the *Greeks* were mere *children* both in *hiſtory* and *ſcience*, and had *nothing* that bore the marks of *antiquity* among them.

You will excuſe me, if I add, that they arrived to ſuch a height of knowledge by the inſtructions which they brought from *Egypt*, that in ſome inſtances the *Grecian* learning ſeems to have dwindled afterwards (even tho' *Egypt* it ſelf ſubmitted to the *Grecian* arms) when the famed maſters of it ventured to ſet up for new *hypotheſes* of their own, and departed from the doctrine of their predeceſſors. I refer it to thoſe who are better skilled in *aſtronomy*, to explain what preference is due to the *Pythagorean* above the *Ptolemaick* ſyſtem. The thing is on all hands readily acknowledg'd, ſince the former has been happily revived by *Copernicus*, and has even forced it ſelf at laſt to be

[e] Iſocrat. in laud. Buſirid. Diodor. Sic. Biblioth. l. 1. p. 86. Plutarch. in Lycurgo & Solone. Diog. Laert. in Thalete, Solone, Platone, Pythagorâ. Vid. & Clem. Alex. Joſeph. & Euſeb. ut ſupra.

[f] Ὦ Σόλων, Σόλων, Ἕλληνες ἀεὶ παῖδες ἐστὲ, γέρων δὲ Ἕλλην οὐκ ἔστιν. —— Νέοι ἐστὲ πὰς ψυχὰς πάντες· ὐδεμίαν γὰρ ἐν αὐταῖς ἔχετε, δι' ἀρχαίαν ἀκοὴν, παλαιὰν δόξαν, οὐδὲ μάθημα χρόνῳ πολιὸν οὐδέν. Plato in Timæo p. 474. Ed. Baſil. 1534.

receiv'd with the general applauſe of learned men. Look back then and ſee, by the conſent of all antiquity, from whence the *Samian* philoſopher derived his learning: Was it not from his travels into *Egypt*, and thoſe inſtructions which were communicated by the ſages there? And what will be the conſequence of this, but that the boaſted *aſtronomical* diſcoveries of the two laſt centuries, great as they are, and prodigiouſly improved by an inimitable genius of our own nation, are yet in good part but the revival of *Egyptian* literature, and deſerve the credit of advancing that ſcience perhaps to the ſame height in which the *Egyptians* enjoy'd it more than three thouſand years ago?

I ſay, more than *three thouſand* years; becauſe tho' the travels of *Pythagoras*[t] will not carry us ſo far, yet there can be little doubt but the learning which he found amongſt them, was the ſame which had flouriſh'd there for many ages, ſince we are aſſured by *Joſephus*[u] and other very antient authors, whoſe fragments are preſerv'd by *Euſebius*[w], that they receiv'd their knowledge of *arithmetick* and *aſtronomy* from the patriarch *Abraham*, who ſojourn'd in this country above three hundred years before the birth of *Moſes*, after he had taught the ſame ſciences in *Chaldea* and *Paleſtine*, the knowledge of which, 'tis probable, he owed himſelf to ſome traditional inſtruction, convey'd from *Adam*, or from *Enoch*, thro' the family of *Shem*, and perhaps in the main of a divine original.

[t] *Pythagoras* (by the advice of *Thales*, who died in the 58th *Olympiad*, 546 years before *Chriſt*) travell'd into *Egypt*, in the 18th year of his age, and died himſelf in the laſt year of the 70th *Olympiad*, 495 years before *Chriſt*, being eighty or ninety years of age. *Diog. Laert. in* Pythagora. *Vid. Voſſ. de Philoſoph. ſectis cap.* 6. §. 1. [u] Joſeph. Ant. Jud. l. 1. c. 9. aliàs 8. ſect. 2.. [w] Eupolemus & Artapanus ex Alexandro Polyhiſtore apud Euſeb. Præp. Evang. lib. 9. p. 245, 246. Ed. Rob. Steph. 1544.

But whether we refer their firſt knowledge of theſe matters to *Abraham*, or to their own celebrated *Hermes*, 'tis poſſible they might receive farther improvements from the Patriarch *Joſeph*, whom a very antient author [x] mentions to have taught them *geometry*, and whom *Pharaoh* is ſaid in Scripture [y] to have *made lord over his houſe, and ruler of all his ſubſtance*, for this end and purpoſe, *that he might ſchool* (or breed up) *his princes as himſelf, and make his elders wiſe*, as that paſſage of the Pſalmiſt is expreſs'd in the verſion of the *Septuagint* [z].

At leaſt this Patriarch muſt have the honour of inſtructing them in *civil policy:* for which that people grew ſo famous in ſucceeding times, that the moſt celebrated of the *Greeks* are ſaid to have fetched their maxims of government from them, inſomuch that the laws of *Lycurgus*, *Solon* and *Plato*, were in great meaſure form'd on the *Egyptian* model, and owed the praiſe of their exactneſs to the wiſdom of *Barbarians* [a].

Nor need we reſt this matter only on profane authority, ſince the *Egyptian* policy is fully intimated in thoſe very places of Scripture where God upbraids them with folly, and threatens to confound it. *Surely* (ſays the Prophet) *the princes of Zoan are become fools, the counſel of the wiſe counſellors of Pharaoh is become brutiſh: how ſay ye unto Pharaoh, I am the ſon*

[x] Artapanus apud Euſeb. ut ſupr. p. 251. [y] Pſal. cv. 21, 22.
[z] Τοῦ ΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΑΙ τοὺς ἄρχοντας αὐτοῦ ὡς ἑαυτὸν, καὶ τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους αὐτοῦ σοφίσαι. [a] ---Καὶ Λυκοῦργον δὲ, καὶ Πλάτωνα, καὶ Σόλωνα πολλὰ τῶν ἐξ Αἰγύπτου νομίμων εἰς τὰς ἑαυτῶν καταταξαι νομοθεσίας. Diod. Sic. Biblioth. l. 1. p. 88. Vid. & Plutarch. in Lycurgo. *The ſame is ſaid of* Plato *and* Solon, *by* Ammian. Marcellin. l. 22. c. 16. verſus fin. *Yet both* Plutarch *and* Diogenes Laertius *ſuppoſe* Solon *to have gone into* Egypt *after his laws were made; tho' by the account of the former he appears to have been a traveller before them.*

of the wiſe? Where are they? Where are thy wiſe men? [b] This paſſage, how full ſoever of deriſion and ſcorn, muſt argue them to have been generally had in reputation for counſel and wiſdom. Nor does the Prophet contradict the common eſtimation, any otherwiſe than by compariſon, by placing theirs in the ſame view with ſuperior wiſdom, by obſerving that the *wiſdom* of men, how great ſoever it may appear in competition with the reſt of mortals, is but *fooliſhneſs with God*, and inconſiderable as nothing, if compared with the all-wiſe Creator, who is able at once to confound their policy, and baffle all their ſchemes. And whatever intimations this may give us of their conceit and confidence in their own attainments, yet ſure it can be no reflection on thoſe attainments themſelves, that the preference ſhould thus be given to his infinite wiſdom. It is rather an honour done their learning, as the greateſt height which human minds had reach'd, that it ſhould be ſo much as mention'd, or but glanced at in compariſon. And accordingly, when the higheſt elogies are beſtowed upon the *wiſdom* of *Solomon*, we find it is commended as *excelling the wiſdom of all the children of the Eaſt country* (i. e. *Chaldea*) *and all the wiſdom of Egypt* [c].

Such therefore was that *wiſdom*, or learning, in which *Moſes* was brought up, with all the advantage that could be expected from the moſt accompliſh'd maſters [d], and all other helps that intereſt, authority, or riches could procure. And leſt we ſhould ſuſpect that he wanted either capacity or application to make ſuitable improvements, let us obſerve his character from the hiſtory of his life, with what good conduct and

[b] Iſai. xix. 11, *&c.*

[c] 1 Kings iv. 30.

[d] Phil. de vitâ Moſis, l. 1. p. 41.

œconomy

œconomy he govern'd an untoward nation for forty years together, ſuch as muſt argue him experienced in civil policy; with what accuracy he has ſumm'd up the body of their laws, both ſacred and political, and ſtated the motives to obedience; with what skill and exactneſs he preſcribed the making of the veſtments, and other utenſils for the ſervice of the tabernacle. (For if it be mention'd as an argument of extraordinary wiſdom in *Beſaleel* [e], to perform a curious variety of works on that occaſion, it ſhould ask no leſs, I would imagine, in *Moſes* [f] to conceive and direct the patterns for them.) And tho' it be allow'd that *Moſes* had the help of inſpiration to conduct him in theſe matters, yet ſince it required a good degree of capacity even to report the words which God had dictated, and ſince God has been pleaſed to illuminate, not always and altogether by miraculous infuſions, but by bleſſing likewiſe the ſtudies and endeavours of men, we are not to be blamed if, after the example of St. *Stephen* in the text, we ſhould in ſome ſort impute the enlargement of his capacity to the advantage of his education, qualifying him to be thus *mighty in words and deeds* [g]. Eſpecially there being reaſon to believe, that his excellencies here refer'd to were conſpicuous before his being called of God, ſince it is obſerved, both by *Philo* [h], and *Joſephus* [i], what extraordinary progreſs he

[e] Exod. xxxv. 30, &c. and xxxvi. 1, 2. [f] Μωσῆν ἀνακέκληκεν καὶ ἐλάλησεν αὐτῷ ὁ Θεός· καὶ Βεσελεὴλ ἀνακέκληκεν, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὁμοίως——— διὰ τοῦθ' εὑρήσεις τὴν σκηνὴν καὶ τὰ σκεύη πάντα ἀυτῆς, πρότερον μὲν ὑπὸ Μωσέως, ἄυθις δ' ὑπὸ Βεσελεὴλ κατασκευαζόμενα· Μωσῆς μὲν γὰρ τὰ ἀρχέτυπα τεχνιτεύει, Βεσελεὴλ δὲ τὰ τούτων μιμήματα. Philo Jud. leg. Alleg. l. 2. p. 54. Ed. Turneb. 1552. [g] Acts vii. 22. [h] Διδάσκαλοι δ' εὐθὺς ἀλλαχόθεν ἄλλοι παρῆσαν——— ὧν ἐν οὐ μακρῷ χρόνῳ τὰς δυνάμεις ὑπερέβαλεν, εὐμοιρίᾳ φύσεως φθάνων τὰς ὑφηγήσεις, ὡς ἀνάμνησιν εἶναι δοκεῖν, οὐ μάθησιν, ἔτι καὶ προσεπινοῶν αὐτὸς τὰ δυσθεώρητα. Phil. de vit. Moſis, l. 1. p. 412. [i] Σύνεσις δὲ οὐ κατὰ τὴν ἡλικίαν ἐφύετο αὐτῷ· τοῦ δὲ ταύτης μέτρου πολὺ κρείττων, καὶ πρεσβυτέραν διεδείκνυε ταύτης τὴν περιουσίαν ἐν ταῖς παιδείαις, καὶ μειζόνων τῶν ὑπ' ἀνδρὸς γενησομένων ἐπαγγελίαν εἶχε τὰ τότε πραττόμενα. Joſeph. Antiq. Jud. l. 2. c. 9. ſect. 6. Edit. Oxon. aliàs c. 5.

made

made in the learned ſciences during his younger years, how he quickly outſtript the beſt of his preceptors, preventing (as it were) their lectures to him, ſo that the ſciences they taught he ſeem'd rather to take by dint of genius, than to owe to their inſtructions. Which may in ſome meaſure account for the judgment of other antient authors alledg'd by *Euſebius* [k], who have reckon'd him the firſt of *philoſophers*. And to all this ſome learned men [l] have added (whether rightly or not, let others judge) that the mention which is made of his *burning the golden calf*, in *Exodus* [m], and *grinding it to powder*, and then mixing it with *water*, that it might become potable for the *children of Iſrael to drink of it*, is a ſignal proof of his skill in *chymiſtry*, which he had learnt in *Egypt*.

Such then being the evidences of the learning of this *Hebrew* lawgiver, produced as well from unexceptionable teſtimony, as from plain fact; one would not eaſily expect to find him cenſured by a man of yeſterday, as a perſon of no *polite* genius, nor any great *capacity* [n]. And yet ſuch is the perverſeneſs of theſe licentious times, that not only this cenſure has been paſſed upon him, but even his skill in the *Egyptian* learning, inſtead of being reckon'd an advantage, has been urg'd as an objection to his character, as leading him indeed to groſs ignorance and ſuperſtition, poſſeſſing him with abſurd notions of the nature of God, and deluding him rather with fictitious myſteries, than inſtructing him in real wiſdom.

[k] Eupolemus & Artapanus apud Euſeb. præp. Evang. l. 9. p. 252. Ed. Steph. 1544. [l] Olaus Borrich. de ortû & progreſſû chemiæ, p. 47. *Item* de Hermetis, Ægyptior. & Chemicor. ſapientiâ, l. 1. c. 9. ſect. 14. *See alſo* Boerhaave's *late account of the origine of chemiſtry*. [m] Exod. xxxii. 20. Deut. ix. 21. [n] ----*Que Moiſe n' etoit pas un fort habile homme——— n' etoit pas un homme fort éclaire.* Sentimens de quelques Theologiens de Hollande ſur l' hiſtoire critique, Let. 5. p. 82.

It

It ſhall not be by me diſputed but that the *Egyptian* learning, like all other not conducted by principles of true religion, might have much in it, as to ſacred things, of ſuperſtitious vanity and empty ſpeculation: ſince whatever excuſes have been feign'd by learned men [o], to perſuade us that a ſound and ſober ſenſe was meant to be convey'd under the cover of emblems and *hieroglyphical* deſcriptions; it is yet beyond all contradiction evident, not only that this became to after-ages the occaſion of ſuch ſilly ſuperſtition as is juſtly expoſed by the wits of *Athens* [p], and of *Rome* [q], but even that in elder times they incurr'd the guilt of idolatry, and aſcribed divine honours to creatures meaner than themſelves [r]: from whence the *Iſraelites*, who ſojourn'd with them, are taxed in ſacred Writ with having *defiled themſelves with the idols of Egypt* [ſ], and the *golden calves* they worſhip'd afterwards are cenſured as an imitation of *Egyptian* idolatry [t].

[o] Vid. Marſham. chron. can. Secul. 1. & Ol. Borrich. de Hermetis, Ægyptior. & chemicor. ſapientiâ, l. 1. c. 8. ſect. 3.

[p] Βοῦν προσκυνεῖς, ἐγὼ δὲ θύω τοῖς θεοῖς
Τὴν ἔγχελυν μέγιστον ἡγῆ δαίμονα,
Ἡμῶν δὲ τῶν ὄψων μέγιστον παρὰ πολύ.
Οὐκ ἐσθίεις ὕεια, ἐγὼ δὲ γ' ἥδομαι
Μάλιστα τούτοις. Κύνα σέβεις, τύπτω δ' ἐγώ.

Anaxandrid. Comicus apud Athenæum Deipnoſoph. l. 7. c. 13. p. 299, 300. *ubi plura ex eodem, ut & ſimilia ex* Antiphane & Timocle *Antiquis Comicis.*

[q] Quis neſcit, Voluſi Bithynice, qualia demens
Ægyptus portenta colat? crocodilon adorat
Pars hæc: Illa pavet ſaturam ſerpentibus Ibin.
Illic cœruleos, hic piſcem fluminis, illic
Oppida tota canem venerantur, nemo Dianam.
Porrum & cœpe nefas violare, ac frangere morſû.
O ſanctas gentes, quibus hæc naſcuntur in hortis.
Numina! Lanatis animalibus abſtinet omnis
Menſa. Nefas illic fœtum jugulare capellæ.

Juvenal. Satyr. 15.

[r] Exod. viii. 26. Vid. Cunrad. Dieteric. Antiq. Biblic. vol. 1. p. 136.

[ſ] Joſ. xxiv. 14. Ezek. xx. 7, 8. [t] Acts vii. 39, 40.

But

But then it muſt be added in this caſe, that *Moſes* was ſo well inſtructed in that *wiſdom* likewiſe *which is from above*[u], as to reject whatever in the *Egyptian* learning was impious and vain, and retain only what was laudable and juſt[w]. This I judge but reaſonable to be preſumed of him, who, long before his miſſion to *deliver his brethren*, proceeded on a principle of *faith*[x], and thro' the vigor of that principle, *when he came to years, refuſed to be called the ſon of Pharaoh's daughter; chooſing rather* (as the author to the *Hebrews* goes on) *to ſuffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin*, which are but *for a ſeaſon; eſteeming the reproach of Chriſt greater riches than the treaſures in Egypt: for he had reſpect unto the recompence of the reward*, and *endured as ſeeing him who is inviſible*. So that if it may be thought an argument of true *wiſdom*, to have a juſt eſtimate of things, and act accordingly; to know God and his people, and the relation they bear to one another; to foreſee the *Meſſiah* many ages off, and know how to hold communion and fellowſhip with him; to prefer a glorious, tho' future recompence, to whatever appears bright and dazling at preſent; to be encouraged laſtly and ſupported under all difficulties, by that view which a lively faith affords of the inviſible God: if all this, I ſay, may paſs for a ſufficient argument of true *wiſdom*, all this then had *Moſes* to correct the vanities of the *Egyptian* learning, and compleat his own.

[" But we are told (and this is urged as an objec-
" tion[y] at leaſt againſt his being a finiſhed *legiſlator*)
" that *Moſes* was conſcious of his own defects, and

[u] Jam. iii. 17.
[x] Heb. xi. 24, &c.
[w] Vid. Herman. Witſ. Miſcel. Sacr. l. 1. c. 7. §. 16.
[y] Sentimens de quelques Theologiens de Hollande, p. 82.

" readily confeſs'd himſelf to be *ſlow of ſpeech, and of*
" *a ſlow tongue* [z]. As if readineſs of utterance were
" inſeparable from a diſtinct conception of things,
" and a capacity of expreſſing them deliberately in
" proper terms! which is ſo palpably abſurd, that but
" to mention, is to confute it.

" Again, we are told [a], this great lawgiver was
" too ſhallow to foreſee, that he was *alone* unequal
" to the whole burden of the people, and wanted
" *Jethro*'s advice [b] to model his government in ſuch a
" form, as might make it eaſier to himſelf, and more
" commodious for them. But ſure, extraordinary di-
" ligence and application, ſticking at no toil and la-
" bour, was never before urged as an argument of
" folly. It rather ſhews his wiſdom, that he could ſo
" long attend to ſuch variety of controverſies as muſt
" be ſuppoſed in ſuch a number of people; and *Je-*
" *thro* himſelf plainly confeſs'd (ſhall I ſay? or pro-
" claim'd) it, when he propoſed that the moſt diffi-
" cult caſes ſhould ſtill be referr'd to his determina-
" tion. To leſſen his perpetual fatigue of buſineſs,
" the careful father-in-law adviſed there might be
" ſome inferior officers appointed, to prevent his be-
" ing moleſted with ſuch trifling controverſies, as were
" troubleſome rather to be heard, than be decided.
" But to expreſs at the ſame time his high value for
" the judgment of the lawgiver, he provided that,
" when any difficulty of importance ſhould occur, the
" cauſe ſhould always be removed, and ſubmitted to
" his arbitration.

" There are two other inſtances more particularly
" urged againſt the learning he acquired in *Egypt:*
" one is that paſſage where he deſires of God, that

[z] Exod. iv. 10. [a] Sentimens, p. 82, 83. [b] Exod. xviii. 13, &c.

" he

" he would *tell* him his *name*[c]. *As if* (ſays the aſ-
" ſuming critick) *there were more Gods than one, who*
" *ſhould want to be diſtinguiſh'd from each other by*
" *different appellations*[d]. *For ſo the Egyptians* (goes
" he on) *had a thouſand ſubtilties about the names of*
" *their Gods, with whoſe opinions, at that time, it ſeems*
" *that* Moſes *was poſſeſs'd.* But to omit that our au-
" thor has not ſhewn us what *Egyptian ſubtilties* this
" asking the *name* of God might ſerve: could he,
" whoſe faith, e're this, is ſo much commended by
" the author to the *Hebrews*; could he be now ſo
" ſtupidly ignorant of the unity of God? Or would
" God have encourag'd and confirm'd that ſuperſti-
" tion by telling him his name? No: both had better
" ends to ſerve. The all-wiſe Governor of heaven
" and earth had uſed to call himſelf by ſome ſpecial
" or ſymbolical name, ſetting forth the eternity of his
" nature, the immutability of his purpoſe, or the effi-
" cacy of his power, when he meant to engage the
" affections of men under ſome difficult circumſtance,
" and to excite their truſt and confidence in him.
" That was what *Moſes* at this time deſired, and God
" diſdain'd not to vouchſafe.

" The other inſtance is that paſſage, where *Moſes*
" deſires of God that he would *ſhew* him his *glory*[e]:
" *As if* (ſays the ſame forward critick) *he had believed*
" *God to be corporeal*[f]; in like manner as *Orus* and
" *Amenophis, Egyptian* kings, are ſaid[g] to have been
" *enflamed with a vehement deſire of ſeeing the gods.*
" I hope I may be excuſed relating what has been of-
" fer'd by the learned, both of *Jews* and *Chriſtians*,
" upon this matter, in regard that the word *ſeeing*

[c] Exod. iii. 13. [d] Sentimens, p. 82. [e] Exod. xxxiii. 18.
[f] Sentimens, p. 83. [g] Manetho *apud* Joſeph. contr. Apion. l. 1. ſect. 26. p. 1352. Edit. Oxon.

" does plainly admit of ſeveral acceptations, ſome of " which being in Scripture expreſly applied to God as " the object, there can be no reaſon to confine this " paſſage to that ſenſe which is of all others the moſt " groſs and abſurd, and in which no reaſonable *hea-* " *then* could ever have underſtood the ſupreme Being to " be viſible: eſpecially ſince *Moſes*'s expreſſion is no more " than this, that he would *ſhew* him his GLORY; which " ſurely he might ask, without ſuppoſing God to be " embodied, unleſs we will ſay there could be no " ſymbolical repreſentation of the divine *glory*, (as we " know there actually was over the ark of the cove- " nant) and charge the author to the *Hebrews* with " abſurdity, when he deſcribed this lawgiver, as not " only deſiring to ſee, but as actually *ſeeing him who is* " *inviſible* [h]."]

I am forced to be thus ſhort in my reply, that I may have time to do juſtice to the

II. Second head of diſcourſe, where from the foregoing enquiry into the education and attainments of *Moſes*, I propoſed to deduce the lawfulneſs, and explain the advantages, of *human learning*, in oppoſition to thoſe weak ſophiſms and cavils which ſome conceited noveliſts have imagined to the contrary.

St. *Stephen* now, had he not judg'd it a lawful and indeed a commendable quality, would never have made it part of his encomium of *Moſes*, which was deſigned to avert the envy of that charge the *Jews* had brought againſt him, of *blaſphemy againſt Moſes, and againſt God*. Nor would St. *Paul* have men- tion'd his skill in languages [i] (which way ſoever ac- quired) to recommend himſelf, if it were not indeed a

[h] Heb. xi. 27. [i] 1 Cor. xiv. 18.

valuable

valuable qualification. The holy Scriptures would not ſo extol and magnify the wiſdom of *Solomon*, and others, if attainments of this nature were ſinful or without uſe. Nor would they earneſtly preſs and encourage, as they do, a diligent ſearch after *underſtanding* and *knowledge*, unleſs they might conduce to ends worthy of ſuch diligent purſuance.

But there is little need of authority to recommend that, which does ſo amply recommend it ſelf. Such is the excellency of *human learning*, that it is impoſſible to conceive how any thing ſo entertaining in the theory, ſo uſeful in the application, and withal ſo ornamental in the figure it makes, ſhould be unlawful to be acquired, or ſhould not indeed rather be highly worthy of the moſt laborious purſuits. The mind of man is capable of great improvements, not to be attained but by much pains and ſtudy; from whence we ſee every day the mighty difference between a liberal and ſordid education. In the one, human nature ſeems only to reſemble the rude lines of an unfiniſh'd piece, which may indeed diſcover the bulk that is deſigned, but without that beauty, order and proportion, which ſhould recommend it. In the other 'tis, as it were, finiſh'd by the artiſt's hand, and ſeems to want nothing that ſhould make it lovely and agreeable. So that it was pertinently ſaid of *Plato*, that if wiſdom could ſhew it ſelf in any viſible form, men would be vehemently enamour'd with it[k]. And whatever be at preſent the difficulty of ſearching after it, yet ſuch will be at laſt the ſatisfaction of ſucceeding in the ſearch, as will make them full amends for all their pains, and be taſted with the better reliſh for

[k] Ἡ φρόνησις ὀυχ ὁρᾶτον· δεινοὺς γὰρ ἂν παρεῖχεν ἔρωτας, εἴτι τοιοῦτον ἐναργὲς ἄϑλον παρείχετο εἰς ὄψιν ἰόν. Plato in Phœdr. p. 204. Edit. Paſil. 1534.

the

the remembrance of thoſe very difficulties they have conquer'd. What tongue can juſtly ſet forth their ſatisfaction and delight, that either ſearch into the myſteries of nature, or underſtand the curious contrivances of art; that know the different policies of ſtates and kingdoms, and converſe with ages long ſince paſt and gone; that have learnt to conclude from ſolid principles of reaſon, and know how to detect the fallacy and weakneſs of deceitful arguments?

I forbear to expatiate farther on the tranſporting pleaſures which ariſe from *learning*, in regard its excellency is ſuch, that it ſerves not only to pleaſe but profit, to improve the mind with uſeful leſſons and inſtructions, as well as entertain it with delightful ſpeculations. The neceſſity of virtue is more clearly diſcern'd, and the meaſures of our duty are more eaſily preſcribed, when men are able to perceive the conſequences of their actions, and infer fit rules of life from their obſervation of the nature of things. They are likewiſe better able to gain advantage to themſelves, and go the readieſt way to work in any enterprize, when they know the connexion between cauſes and effects, and have all the experience of former ages which learning can afford. Laſtly, they are once more better able to provide againſt future danger, and extricate themſelves out of preſent difficulties, when they are arm'd with all the caution and foreſight of human policy, and the *wiſdom* of the *ſerpent* is added to the *innocence* of the *dove*[1].

Nor is its influence confined at home, but diffuſive of it ſelf extends to all that ſtand in any way related to us. The *philoſopher* ſtudies, not only for himſelf, but for the common benefit of human kind; and

[1] Mat. x. 16.

by

by his uſeful diſcoveries unfolds thoſe ſecrets for the publick good, which had been otherwiſe lock'd up in the profoundeſt ſilence. The power of *medicine* to heal diſeaſes, might have remain'd a ſecret, and mankind have been for ever deſtitute of wholſome remedies, were it not for ſuch cultivation and improvement of the mind as *human learning* gives. I need not obſerve to you how the ſeveral arts of *arithmetick*, *geometry*, *navigation*, and the reſt, conduce to the good order and government of the world; to the adjuſting mens various rights and intereſts; to the ſymmetry, and thereby to the duration of buildings; to the conjunction of countries far diſtant in ſituation, and thereby to the better carrying on of trade and commerce. Nor can you want to be reminded, that an enquiry into the nature of *moral* good and evil, muſt likewiſe be of general uſe, beneficial to the publick, as well as to the ſtudent, qualifying ſome for the information and tuition of others, to furniſh them that have leſs leiſure and abilities with true principles, and inſtruct them fully in the nature of their duty. Upon the ſame grounds it is notorious that a *liberal education* is of vaſt advantage in matters of *divinity*, for the diſcovery and ſupport of true Religion, by removing from it what is vain and erroneous, by rightly uſing and applying the light of revelation, by clearly ſtating and explaining its doctrines, and by the proper enforcement of its precepts from certain principles, and thoſe diſplay'd with the moſt moving and perſuaſive eloquence. And from the whole, it will be obvious to collect what ought not to be omitted upon this occaſion, that thoſe *firſt rudiments* of literature we learn at ſchool, muſt needs be highly beneficial, as laying the foundation for all the reſt, and being indeed

the proper ground-work upon which any part of *human learning* ſhould be built.

So entertaining therefore in it ſelf, and ſo beneficial in its conſequences, *human learning* can have no enemies that are real friends to truth; but whatever pretences they may make, the foundation of their quarrel muſt be this, that they admit ſome enormities which cannot bear the teſt of right and well-informed reaſon; that they therefore *hate the light*, and are afraid to *come to the light*, *leſt* their *deeds ſhould be reproved*[l]. ["However, that they may not complain "of being condemn'd unheard, I will briefly conſider "the ſum of what is offer'd by thoſe two very diffe-"rent kinds of enemies it meets with, *free-thinkers* "and *enthuſiaſts.*"]

The enthuſiaſt ["in the firſt place"] objects againſt it, as *deceitful*, or *vexatious*, or at beſt but *uſeleſs*. The *deceitfulneſs* of *human learning*, he would build upon St. *Paul*'s authority, who calls it *philoſophy and vain deceit*; and warns his *Coloſſians* to *beware leſt any man* ſhould *ſpoil* them by it[m]. But they who make this objection, would do well to diſtinguiſh between the different ends and uſes to which *learning* is applied. The right end of it, is to ſerve for the better illuſtration and diſcovery of truth: and when it is ſubſervient to this purpoſe, the holy Scripture is ſo far from condemning it, that it recommends it rather, as highly beneficial; and St. *Paul* eſpecially, who was *brought up* himſelf *at the feet of Gamaliel*[n], whoſe epiſtles and diſcourſes argue him to have been converſant in the writings of the poets[o], and who boaſts of his own skill in the learned languages[p], above the generality

[l] John iii. 20. [m] Col. ii. 8. [n] Acts xxii. 2. [o] Acts xvii. 28. 1 Cor. xv. 33. Tit. i. 12. [p] 1 Cor. xiv. 18.

of

of gifted chriſtians, (which, tho' it were in the main the effect of inſpiration, yet gives withal an honourable atteſtation to the uſefulneſs of the thing) he cannot be ſuppoſed to have thought meanly of thoſe accompliſhments which he both uſed and gloried in. But when, inſtead of this, it is perverted to find out ſophiſms and fallacies, to diſguiſe the nature of things, and impoſe upon the ignorance or credulity of others, to perplex their minds with needleſs ſubtilties, and run them into endleſs uncertainty and doubt (which was the cuſtom of many of the ancient ſages;) 'tis ſuch *philoſophy* as this St. *Paul* has branded with the character of *vain deceit*, or (as he elſewhere [q] ſtyles it) *profane and vain bablings, and oppoſitions of ſcience, falſly ſo called.* It is not then, you ſee, the thing it ſelf, but the abuſe or vain pretence of it the Apoſtle blames.

Nor are they leſs deceiv'd in the argument they draw from the *vexatiouſneſs* and uncertainty of *human learning*, which the wiſeſt of men reckon'd to be but *vanity and vexation of ſpirit*, becauſe that *in much wiſdom is much grief, and he that increaſeth knowledge increaſeth ſorrow* [r]. For here again there is a pertinent diſtinction to be made between the ſtudy of *human learning*, look'd upon as being it ſelf our ſupreme good and happineſs, and as a means only which may be ſubſervient and conducive to it. It was *Solomon*'s buſineſs, in his book of *Eccleſiaſtes*, to ſhew, that nothing but religion or the fear of God can make us truly happy. To that end, he obſerves the *vanity* of all other ſchemes of happineſs, and among them, how even *learning* it ſelf, tho' it bids fairer than the reſt, is yet very defective, and will leave the man far ſhort of hap-

[q] 1 Tim. vi. 20. [r] Eccleſ. i. 14, 17, 18.

pineſs, who has no higher aims; eſpecially if he be (as without religion men are too apt to be) over-curious to ſearch deeper than human reaſon can fathom, and unwilling to reſolve every thing, at laſt, into unſearchable wiſdom and omnipotence. But this is no real diſparagement to that wiſdom and knowledge, which being kept ſubordinate, and made ſubſervient to religious purpoſes, does humbly admire what it cannot comprehend, and therefore can be no juſt objection againſt that right uſe of *human learning* which I am at preſent deſirous to recommend, and which indeed may be ſufficiently recommended from the example of the ſame King *Solomon* himſelf, whom the Scripture praiſes, not only for his excellent rules and precepts of *morality*, but likewiſe for his genius in *poetry*, and for his skill in *natural philoſophy*, for his *ſpeaking of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyſſop that ſpringeth out of the wall: of beaſts alſo, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fiſhes*[s].

Again, it is objected, that in *divinity* at leaſt, all *human learning* muſt be *uſeleſs*, becauſe the *Holy Spirit* will *guide* the faithful *into all truth*[t]; who are therefore ſaid elſewhere to *be taught of God*[u], to have *received an holy unction, which teacheth* them *all things*[w]; nay, and to have the divine *law written in their hearts*, ſo as to have no farther need that any *man* ſhould *teach* them[x]. I have not time before me to diſcuſs at large this wild enthuſiaſtical objection. Let it only be obſerv'd, that it bears as much againſt the inſtitution of the *miniſtry* to teach the people, as it does againſt the uſe of *learning*; and that however the clearer revelation of the Goſpel, if compared with the law, may

[s] 1 Kings iv. 32, 33. [t] John xvi. 13. [u] John vi. 45. Iſai. liv. 13. [w] 1 Joh ii. 20, 27. [x] Jer. xxxi. 33, 34.

be

be ſet forth by ſuch expreſſions, to denote the brightneſs of that divine illumination which it ſpreads abroad, yet they are none of them deſign'd to exclude all uſe of natural and outward means, by concurring with which the Holy Ghoſt is often repreſented to perform his operations. He teaches us, 'tis true, by the inward energy and illumination of his grace: yet not this immediately and without more to do, but by bleſſing firſt the ſtudies of the preacher to know and to interpret, and then by his means diſpenſing forth thoſe bleſſed influences to the diligent attenders of the word and ſacraments, at the ſame time opening their underſtandings to perceive, and diſpoſing their minds to reliſh them.

[" I have but one objection more to examine, and " that is, the *free-thinker*'s, who reckons every man " ought to judge in all matters for himſelf, and not " ſuffer himſelf to be influenc'd by the skill and learn- " ing of another; but eſpecially, that it is moſt unrea- " ſonable, by arts of rhetorick and moving eloquence, " to work on the affections of vulgar minds, and ſo " prevail with them to do that to which they would " otherwiſe be moſt averſe. I fear 'twill be to little " purpoſe to diſpute with them who are ſo fondly " conceited of their own judgments, as to deſpiſe eve- " ry thing that may be ſaid againſt them. Yet for the " ſake of others, let it be return'd, that no man's li- " berty of judging is taken from him, by having rea- " ſons offer'd to direct his judgment; but he ever " judges with the greateſt freedom, who judges moſt " conſiſtently with the appearance of reaſon and truth. " If the matter be ſuch as he is capable of examining " himſelf, he ought ſeriouſly to weigh whatever is thus " offer'd, and either to reject or admit it, as ſhall ap- " pear moſt reaſonable upon mature deliberation. But

" if the matter be above his reach, 'twill be but equi-
" table to believe the learned in their own profeſſion,
" ſince he can have no other way of diſcovering the
" truth. He is not to follow them where he finds
" they are in error, any more than he would wittingly
" take a cup of poiſon if 'twere recommended to him
" by a skilful phyſician. But then neither may he
" neglect their direction, where his own judgment
" fails or wavers, any more than he would refuſe the
" medicine preſcribed by his phyſician, for no other
" reaſon but becauſe he is not thoroughly acquainted
" with the quality and power of thoſe ingredients of
" which it is compounded: always remembring to ap-
" ply himſelf to God, for his ſpecial bleſſing and favour-
" able aſſiſtance.

" And then, as to the other part of the objection,
" although I ſhall allow the moving of mens paſſions,
" where there are no reaſons either directly offer'd, or
" at leaſt pre-ſuppos'd, for the conviction of their judg-
" ment, to be an abſurd and unjuſt way of proceed-
" ing; yet ſo many are the inſtances where people
" act againſt their judgment, and are backward to do
" that which they can't but confeſs fitteſt to be done,
" that it deſerves to be eſteem'd, not a lawful only,
" but a neceſſary art, to ſtir up the affections, even
" where the underſtanding is ſufficiently inform'd be-
" fore."]

I have detain'd you ſo long already, that I find my ſelf obliged to contract in thoſe inferences and deductions which I come to make now in the

III. Third and laſt place, from all that has been ſaid.

Inference 1. Firſt, ſuch being (as you have heard) the manifold and great advantages of *human learning*, let

ſet us all be thankful to Almighty God, who has made our nature capable of ſuch improvements. It is ſure a very eaſy return for the bleſſings we receive, to acknowledge the bounty of him who gave them; and he muſt be moſt unworthy of the benefit beſtowed, who will not own it to be one. It is by the exerciſe of reaſon, that we may expect to improve in any ſort of knowledge: and it is that likewiſe which inſtructs us from whom our faculties and powers are derived, and to whom therefore all our gratitude and praiſes muſt be due; ſo that the ſame creature which is capable of ſearching, is likewiſe capable of giving thanks, and therefore will be altogether inexcuſable without it. Again,

Inf. 2. Secondly, let thoſe who are ſet apart to ſuch ſtudies, be careful to improve the *talents* committed to their truſt, ever remembring that *the unprofitable ſervant*, not he only that ſquanders away his lord's money, *and eats and drinks with the drunken*, but likewiſe he that *hides it in the earth*, or *lays it up in a napkin*, and makes not due uſe and improvement of it, ſhall in the end be *caſt into outer darkneſs*, where *there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth*[y].

It was his privilege indeed, to whom *the Spirit was not given by meaſure*[z], to *know* and underſtand *letters*, tho' he *never learned*[a]. But the reſt of human race will have need of labour and ſtudious application, to maſter thoſe points of learning, which are neither natural to any man, nor ordinarily given by ſupernatural and immediate inſpiration. To this end then, let 'em begin with prayer to God, who is able either to proſper or infatuate, from whom *every good and perfect gift deſcends*[b], and without whoſe concurrence their

[y] Mat. xxiv. 49. *and* xxv. 18, 25, 30. Luke xix. 20. [z] John iii. 34.
[a] John vii. 15. [b] Jam. i. 17.

utmoſt

utmoſt endeavours will be vain and ineffectual. *If any man lack wiſdom* (ſays St. *James*) *let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not* [c]. But hereto he muſt be ſure to add his own diligent endeavours and ſerious application. For ſince God's providence works by natural and ordinary means, where theſe are to be had, it can deſerve no better name than formality or mockery, to pray to him for ſuch improvements with folded arms, and a mind not at all addicted to ſuch ſtudies.

Inf. 3. Thirdly, let thoſe who reap benefit from their labours of this kind, value, in return, and eſteem them, for their works ſake. The advantages, we ſee, are great, which redound to the publick from the ſtudies of the learned; and therefore gratitude requires that the publick ſhould make ſuitable acknowledgments to thoſe perſons by whoſe means ſuch advantages are derived to 'em. The rewards and preferment, the honour and reſpect which the wiſdom of nations has thought due to learned men, can ſcarce be deem'd an equal, to be ſure not an over-recompence, for thoſe immenſe benefits which the whole body politick, and every individual receives from them. It were at leaſt to be wiſh'd, that theſe might always be worthily beſtowed, and that no mean or partial views might be allowed to ſuperſede the greateſt and moſt important law of publick good.

Inf. 4. Fourthly and laſtly, let us all therefore, in our ſeveral ſtations and capacities, encourage the ſtudy and increaſe of uſeful learning, by our exhortation, our contribution, or our own induſtry.

But of this I may ſeem to have leſs need to enlarge, when I conſider my ſelf to be ſpeaking before ſuch

[c] Jam. i. 5.

perſons as are met together for this very purpoſe, to contribute their aſſiſtance to ſo good and virtuous a deſign; and who therefore (I truſt) are duly ſenſible, as rational creatures, in the firſt place, how highly it concerns them to promote ſuch cultivation and improvement of the rational nature; as chriſtians, again, how ſtrongly they are obliged to advance the pious purpoſes it ſerves; as fellow-ſubjects, likewiſe, how much it is their intereſt to ſtrengthen and ſecure themſelves, by the increaſe of uſeful knowledge; and as ſchool-fellows, once more, how well it will become them to conſult the intereſt, and encourage the members of that ſchool to which they owe their education.

This ſchool, you cannot want to be inform'd, does in great meaſure ſupply a college, which, for the number of its fellows, and the preferments provided for them, deſerves to be eſteem'd an ample encouragement. Yet conſidering the ſtill greater numbers that are here bred up for the univerſity, it cannot be otherwiſe but that many of them ſhould fall ſhort of this bounty of the founder. To aſſiſt and encourage ſuch, if their circumſtances want it, and the matter can be put in a proper method (of which in the preſent caſe there is no doubt) we are all of us engaged, in proportion to our ſeveral abilities, as men, and ſchool-fellows, and fellow-chriſtians: thoſe of us, in the firſt place, who know by experience the exigences and expence of ſuch an education, together with the beneficial purpoſes it ſerves, and the noble uſes to be made of it; they more who, having hinder'd others from the founder's bounty, by gaining it themſelves, cannot with common decency refuſe ſome little tribute or acknowledgment of the advantage they receive by it; but moſt of all they who, having been formerly beholden to the kind aſſiſtance of this generous ſociety, will do well, now

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their condition in life is changed, to refund ſome part at leaſt of their former exhibition, for the uſe of them whoſe preſent circumſtance does equally require it. Nor can the reſt be reaſonably excuſed from lending their aſſiſtance too, ſince the benefit extends to all; ſo that not the learned only, but the unlearned, will be ſharers in it, and of the two will have the greater need to receive thoſe advantages from other hands, which they are no way qualified to procure for themſelves.

Let ſuch therefore, together with the keeping up a good correſpondence and brotherly affection; let ſuch be the only ends and views of thoſe who meet together in this feaſt of love: and as our aſſembly is begun here in the houſe of God, let it moreover be continued in his fear, and conclude in the promotion of his honour and glory, thro' Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, be all honour and glory, now and henceforth, for evermore. *Amen.*

FINIS.